

PETER KAMA
41-214 Nalu St.
Waimanalo, Hi 96795
Pgr. 252-9164

January 19, 2006

The Honorable Susan Oki Mollway
United States District Judge
Prince Kuhio Federal Building
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Letter of Observations and Support for R. Kawahine Kamakea-Ohelo

Dear Judge Mollway:

I submit this correspondence in an attempt to inform and make you aware of the dedication, compassion, commitment, drive and accomplishments of Kawahine Kamakea-Ohelo.

My name is Peter Kama, a board member of the Waimanalo Health Center from November 1992 until present. I am a retired U.S. Army officer serving 20 years of active duty, serving 4 years in Vietnam and years 9 years in Europe. I started out as a private and retired as a Lt. Col. Infantry Airborne and returned home to help Hawaiians. I have observed Kawahine close and almost daily from November 1992 until September 2003.

In 1988, five women, four of whom were pregnant (including Kawahine) sought to have the Department of Health not close out the facility in Waimanalo. They wanted to continue services for community health, continue operations and expand services. Kawahine stayed the course and with the help of these five women initiated and were eventually granted the authority to do just that in 1992.

In 1992, the membership meeting to elect Board members for Waimanalo Health Center was completed. It was optimism to think this could be a success. Many doubters at the Department of Health and in the community thought failure was for sure. Before 1992 Kawahine completed a survey of the community to assess the population, their needs, their addresses, their telephone numbers, their health insurance, and all that would help justify the need for continued health services for Waimanalo. It is a wonderful commitment to verify with facts the needs and wants of the community. Just for information - Kawahine worked on this project from 1988 to 1992 without pay.

Kawahine's dedication prompted Dr. Akina to volunteer to serve as a provider (medical) for Waimanalo Health Center. We told him we don't have money to pay you. He said "I'll be there on Monday. This is the only community driven health center in Hawaii – it's unique." Dr. Akina worked for 18 months without pay. He brought in other medical

January 19, 2006
Re: Kawahine Kamakea-Ohelo
Page 2 of 3

professionals that came because we were “unique”, and they worked pro bono – helping the center provide needed service – adult care, ob/gyn, infant care, nutrition program, TOPS (taking off pounds sensibly), asthma awareness and prevention, and much more, all though the efforts and persistence of Kawahine Kamakea-Ohelo.

The Hawaiian-ness of our health center made us special. Kawahine brought in a cultural healer, Kawaikapu Hewett, providing cultural healing practices for our community (which is more than 60% Hawaiian), lomi lomi, lapa’au, and ho’oponopono. She exchanged internationally with healers nationwide and worldwide, from Africa, Samoa, Tahiti, New Zealand, American Indians and Jamaica.

Kawahine sent staff to New Zealand to help the fledgling health program for the Maori. The Maori were so grateful for the help they received from Waimanalo Health Center they introduced a program that was successful for their school children. We then adopted that model for our community. It’s implemented at Waimanalo elementary and intermediate schools. We provide a “kupuna” or “makua” in each of the 8th grade classes. They were not teachers or “gofers” they provided a link between teachers and student – student and parents – parent and teachers. Fighting stopped on campus. Those classes where our staff was present, truancy was reduced to zero and our staff was able to identify those that needed medical or social services and Waimanalo Health Center provided those services.

Kawahine was always culturally sensitive and learned as she moved forward. She would stop to help the homeless by taking them to the Center and feeding them. The Weinberg Project in Waimanalo for the homeless was made possible by Kawahine working with state officials who said, “there was no land – no money - can’t be done”. Kapiolani Community College’s old buildings were brought in. The land selected was flood zone and Kawahine got community members to backfill 6.5 acres which was raised 4.5 feet in 4.5 months. Four architects redesigned the buildings and five contractors came to build it on weekends (in coordination with state officials), despite the NIMBY complaints – door to door explanations calmed neighbors and 158 homeless were given a place to stay some nine days before Christmas 1994.

The vision of Kawahine brought volunteers in design and repair for services. She sought out government in state, federal and city to help. She continued working long hours and had a sense of community and long range vision to advance and fulfill the needs through culturally sensitive services in preventive and healing programs. I had the responsibility to terminate her services because her legal advisor advised to say nothing. In tears I sadly ended her vision and sensitive services.

Kawahine is a bright light in a dark room. She echoes the needs of our community and never stopped the moving train always adding another load to move forward. It’s been my honor to be a part of her success because it benefited our community.

In summary, Kawahine gave her all to make the Waimanalo Health

January 19, 2006
Re: Kawahine Kamakea-Ohelo
Page 3 of 3

Center advance and better able to provide culturally sensitive services. Her compassion for her community, her people, and her family never ended. Her commitment never faulted. I always told her "The higher up the flag pole you go the more of you is exposed." Undaunted she fought for what she thought was right. There are many who can do but very few could have accomplished what was done under her leadership.

- From \$88,000 budget to \$3,000,000;
- From one building, to six in 11 years;
- From 28 patients to 3,000;
- From staff of 3 to 56;
- From only adult care to adding:
 1. OB/GYN
 2. Infant Care
 3. Psychiatric care
 4. Teen Force (teen club)
 5. Wick Program
 6. TOPS
 7. Nutritional Program
 8. Asthma Program
 9. Ku Ika Mana Program in Waimanalo Elementary School
 10. Senior Nutrition Program
 11. Diabetes Screening
 12. Upgrading computer system
 13. Water screening, monitoring program
 14. Coordination with Bellows Field
 15. National health conferences
 16. Native healing conferences
 17. And much, much more during her leadership.

The most significant character of R. Kawahine Kamakea-Ohelo is her ability to stay focused on the needs of the community – not limited to healing – but to preventive care through exercise, activity and schooling in nutrition. Aloha 'Aina for the land, the water, the air and the spiritual respect for those wise men now gone. She represents what is good for our people. I told her no one is perfect and we make mistakes. The good you have done will be remembered. The wrongs, I would have given you an opportunity to make right; then forgiven you. For all the good that Kawahine has done for so many people in Hawaii I ask the Court not to sentence her to prison. She is too good a person for that.

Aloha,



PETER KAMA